AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [2] 12, further comprising:

a communication unit for communicating with another image processing apparatuses, wherein

when it is judged that the image data is not to be maintained, said maintenance judgment means causes said communication unit to transfer the image data to another image processing apparatuses.

4. (Original) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein

said maintenance judgment means attaches information for identifying an image processing apparatus, which is an origin of the image data, and the information for identifying another image processing apparatus, which is a destination of the image data, to the image data as a transference history of the image data when the image data is to be transferred.

5. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [1] 12, further comprising:

appending information attaching means for attaching the appending information to the image data.

6. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [1] 12, further comprising:

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composite means for composing the image data with the other image data based on the correlativity information.

7. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [1] 12, wherein

said appending information generating means generates information indicating contents of the image data as the appending information by analyzing the image.

8. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [1] 12, wherein

said appending information generating means generates processing conditions for processing the image data as the appending information by analyzing the image.

9. (Currently Amended) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim [1] 12, further comprising:

selection means for selecting the other image data, which is to be used for judgment of the correlativity, using at least a part of the appending information.

10. (Original) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein

said selection means repeats to select the plurality of other image data until a predetermined number of the other image data are selected.

11. (Original) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein

said correlativity judgment means further judges whether the correlativity between the selected other image data and the image data is higher than a predetermined value, and

said selection means repeats to select the plurality of other image data until the other image data, of which the correlativity with the image data is higher than the predetermined value, are selected more than a predetermined number.

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12. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:

appending information generating means for generating appending information based on contents of an image data when the image data is received;

a data storage unit for storing another image data including the appending information;

correlativity judgment means for judging a correlativity between the image data and another image data ~~from which the appending information is generated~~ based on the appending information; and

maintenance judgment means for judging whether the received image data is to be maintained in the data storage unit based on the correlativity.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) An image processing method, comprising the steps of:

generating appending information based on contents of an image data when the image data is received;

storing in a data storage unit another image data including the appending information;

judging a correlativity between the image data and another image data ~~from which the appending information is generated~~ based on the appending information; and

judging whether the received image data is to be maintained in the data storage unit based on the correlativity.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium storing thereon a program for causing a computer to function [as] by:

~~appending information generating means for~~ generating appending information based on contents of an image data when the image data is received;

storing in a data storage unit another image data including the appending information;

~~correlating judging means for~~ judging a correlativity between the <u>received</u> image data and another image data ~~from which the appending information is generated~~ based on the appending information; and

~~maintenance judgment means for~~ judging whether the <u>received</u> image data is to be maintained <u>in the data storage unit</u> based on the correlativity.

17. (Newly Added) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein

said selection means repeats to select a plurality of the other image data until a predetermined number of the other image data are selected;

said maintenance judgment means judges that the received image data is not to be maintained if only the other image data, of which the correlativity with the received image data is lower than a predetermined reference value, is received.

18. (Newly Added) The image processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein

said maintenance judgment means judges that the received image data is not to be maintained if an average of the correlativity between the received image data and the other image data is less than an average of the correlativity among the other image data in the data storage unit.